



May 5, 2020

House Education Policy Committee,

The School Nurse Organization of Minnesota (SNOM), the Licensed School Nurses working in Minnesota public schools, strongly supports the legislation included in the DE3 Amendment of HF 163, Rep. Youakim, related to the proper disposal of unclaimed medications in schools. The original language is contained in a bipartisan bill, HF 575, authored by Rep. Huot.

Currently there is no legal and ethical way for school health offices to dispose of medications, especially controlled substances, that are left in school offices. Often medications, of any type, are left in the health office at the end of the year, when a child moves or when the medication expires, etc. If the parent does not pick up the medication, the individual overseeing the school health office has no way to properly dispose of them unless this legislation is passed.

Medications are stockpiling in the health offices creating health, security and liability risks. Current federal law only allows the prescribed individual, parent, caregiver or law enforcement the authority to transport controlled substances; if a Licensed School Nurse were to transport a controlled substance, they would be at risk of jeopardizing their school nurse license.

This bill provides a process for dropping off medications for students at the schools and for disposing unused medications left in the school health office. Each school district will adopt a policy and procedures for the collection and transport of unused drugs. If parents do not pick up the unused uncontrolled medication, this bill will allow the school district to designate a person to transport the medication for disposal. This must be done at least once annually. If the medication is a controlled substance, the school district may request that law enforcement pick up the medication for transport to an approved disposal site.

The bill has strong support on both sides of the aisle and has been heard three years in a row in both bodies. It has no known opposition.

We strongly urge the passage of this language to ultimately be signed into law.

Sincerely,

Deb Mehr, President

School Nurse Organization of Minnesota (SNOM)